

**PUBLIC WORKS & FACILITIES COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
THURSDAY, AUGUST 21, 2014  
TIME: 7:00 P.M.  
MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
ROOM 208  
MIDDLETOWN CONNECTICUT**

**Members Present:** Chair Carl R. Chisem  
Councilman David Bauer  
Councilman James B. Streeto  
Councilman Thomas Serra  
Councilwoman Sandra Russo-Driska

**Staff Present:** William J. Russo, Public Works Director

**Others Present:** Phil Cacciola, Middletown Resident

Chair Chisem opened the Public Works and Facilities Commission Meeting at 7:00 p.m. He requested a motion to approve the minutes dated July 9, 2014. Minutes were seconded and approved unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Phil Cacciola, Middletown resident also representing the Post 75 American Legion & baseball team, wanted to compliment Director Russo and the Parks Department crew. The northeast regional baseball tournament resulted in many compliments from all different states. They couldn't say enough about the condition of Palmer Field. There were no reported incidents or accidents as a result in the field's conditions which reflect very favorably on Middletown.

The Northeast Regional goes to bid annually. In order to have the Northeast Regional baseball tournament played on Palmer Field; \$15,000.00 is put towards a bid by the American Legion. In total, the tournament costs about \$40,000.00 to run.

Phil Cacciola stated that if each competing team from the 6 states playing at Palmer Field come in with \$1,000.00, it will raise \$6,000.00. If each of the 70 Connecticut teams bring \$100.00, it would raise \$7,000.00. After combining the 6 states and 70 Connecticut teams' funds, it totals \$13,000.00. The balance will then come from the State of Connecticut Baseball Committee

Councilman Serra stated that as a city government, budgets are projected. Projected numbers as a community need to be shown so that when it's further discussed, it can be a supported measure. Phil stated that the chamber has helped in the past, but unfortunately the hotel that is used for the tournaments is in Cromwell by the Marriott because of Middletown Inn's high rates. Information is posted in hotels so that families can look at the majority of Middletown restaurants which will bring more individuals into the community.

As there was no one else that wanted to speak from the public, a motion was made to close the public comment section of the meeting. Motion was seconded and approved.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

- a. Mercy High School Letter - Sr. Mary A. McCarthy, RSM – Director Russo stated that Mercy High School is planning on making proposals to the city as far as fundraising for school renovations to their cafeteria and media center.

The high school is also inquiring about the site on Long Hill Road, which shares the recently constructed Youth Soccer fields. They would like to eventually expand Mercy's athletic program by adding an athletic field and track complex. Mercy is hoping to have first rights to the development and use of the portion of the site for the future athletic complex.

One of the councilmen stated that the city had a 25 year agreement in the past with youth soccer that may supersede the agreement. Councilman Serra reassured him that this is a field that is not built yet.

Councilman Serra stated that the lease agreement should be further looked into. He wants to see if the lease agreement is on all three fields including the undeveloped field, or just the existing two fields.

Commissioner Russo-Driska stated that she is on the Capitol Campaign for Mercy High School and never heard of any Long Hill Road field renovations. She joined the campaign initially for the expansion to the high school to keep the school at state-of-the-art. Documentation on record will be done a year or two from now for that specific campaign. Commissioner Russo-Driska would like to know what the plan is moving forward for the field campaign since it is still informal.

A motion was made to endorse moving forward to see what comes of it as far as the concept and negotiations. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously with agreement to discuss further.

- b. Westfield Residents Association, Inc. Letter – Chair Jennifer Mahr - A letter for permission was submitted to the commission for the design of a 12'X8" "Arline K. Rich Pavilion" sign for the pavilion at Smith Park. Arline Rich is the former Chair of the Westfield Residents Association. The sign will be blue with gold leaf letters and a black outline, created by New England Sign Carvers. Funding will not be needed, just approval for the design.

A motion to approve the design of the new sign for the pavilion at Smith Park was made. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Proposed CNR Fiscal Year 14-15 – Director Russo stated that he was authorized for the \$750,000.00 by Finance & Government Commission and the Public Works & Facilities Commission. This is the list that will be used for future endorsement by Finance and the Common Council. Everything on the list is a necessity and will last more than ten years, which is how long it will take to pay the bond which Finance has included in the list.

Director Russo stated that the international trucks with plows that are 20-22 years old will be replaced, which shows that they are used to their full potential. These are the standardized trucks that are used for sanding as well, so that consistent parts may be purchased on an as needed basis. There is now a computer system that was just recently installed which eliminates time spent towards fixing trucks.

Commissioner Russo-Driska asked if the \$25,000.00 pick-up truck will be replacing something. Director Russo indicated that it will replace the Fleet Managers truck which is about 15 years old. She also asked about the \$12,500.00 copier. Director Russo stated that the copier is removed because it is not allowed to be purchased considering it is not guaranteed for 10-year use.

One of the commissioners wanted to know if the CNR list will get the department ahead just to make sure that nothing will fall behind considering that the \$750,000.00 for the CNR is listed twice. It was indicated that the original CNR for the city as a whole was listed at 6 million dollars. Public Works Department consisted of 2.2 million of that alone. 6 million dollars would not be authorized, so a \$400,000.00-\$600,000.00 range was given and then totaled up due to the bigger equipment being purchased. It was confirmed that the department is well-balanced as far as purchases and is not falling behind.

A motion was made to move approval for the 14-15 CNR. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

- b. Amended CNR Fiscal Year 13-14 – Director Russo stated that the Parks Department is looking to buy a mower for Palmer Field for the Parks Department using the 13-14 bond money issued by the council. The only way to move forward with the purchase is by bringing it back to the council to add it to the funds.

A motion was made to move approval for the amended 13-14 CNR. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

- c. Street Naming Ordinance to Replace Section 262-14 – Director Russo stated that there had been previous discussion on the street naming ordinance and that it was on the council floor. The commission has already approved the last street name “Carlie Court”. He stated that the new ordinance now is very vague consisting of two lines which is two ordinances combined.

Commissioner Bauer stated that one of the ordinances designates Public Works & Facilities as the commission that advises the council for names and the other ordinance categorically states that it is the council that can authorize names. He feels that the way that the names came to the recommendation wasn't strong enough, and was hoping to promote the history and culture of the City of Middletown versus the names that came along. The draft specifies the Public Works Department and the director. It states that the Public Works director may approve a name as proposed or an altered name at his or her discretion.

Director Russo stated that this is just a draft that was drawn up by the City Attorney's office for the commission to review. Commissioner Russo-Driska suggested that the Director of Public Works should present some options to the commission ahead of time, to prevent any issues on the council floor that could have been prevented with a pre-screening.

Commissioner Streeto stated that the individuals on the Arts Commission don't necessarily have any experience with emergency services or road maintenance. A street name can be beautiful but unpractical. The distinction between a city street and a private street needs to be determined in the ordinance.

Councilman Bauer stated that where it says “Letter B” on the draft of the ordinance, it should state “The Public Works & Facilities Commission in conciliation with the Public Works director or his/her designee”. Any time that comes up, it should be just Public Works & Facilities commission’s duties.

A motion was made to work further on the Street Naming Ordinance in the next meeting. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Russo-Driska and approved unanimously.

- d. CIAC High School State Tournament – It was stated that this was already spoken about previously, so a motion was made to move approval. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.
- e. Building Permit Refunds:
  - 1. American Cleaning & Restoration, LLC – 49 Cimarron Road, \$72.30 – approved.
  - 2. Power Home Remodeling Group, LLC – 44 Braeburn Lane, \$143.60 – approved.
  - 3. Power Home Remodeling Group, LLC – 66 Red Road, \$243.42 – approved.

A motion was made to deal with all of the permit refunds provided on the agenda in one consent vote. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

- a. July 2014 Overtime Report – Director Russo stated that the first and second shift Parks employees have worked hard to complete field work at Palmer Field until football season beginning September 12, 2014.
- b. July 2014 Building Permits – It was brought up by one of the commissioners that about \$45,000.00 was generated in building permits in July. He wanted to know if this is any reason for concern considering that this is the height of the construction season. Director Russo stated that there is no reason for concern because the projected revenue was \$570,000.00 last year and this year it remained the same. There is also a proposal for a total of 60 new houses being constructed in Middletown.

#### **OTHER**

- a. July 2014 Monthly Report – Highway Division – The commission reviewed the July 2014 monthly report.
- c. July 2014 Weekly Reports – Parks Division - The commission reviewed the July 2014 weekly report.

Director Russo updated the commission on the streetlight purchase. Originally, in July, CL&P came back with a number that was higher than the city went out to bond for. After having a meeting, the original asking price was accepted based on the 2012 streetlight audit which is \$1,078,000.00. This is under what the city went to referendum for. Confirmation on the purchase was finally given from CL&P last week after going back and forth with prices. In total, it will cost \$26,000.00 per month and \$312,000.00 per year.

As there was no further discussion, the Public Works & Facilities commission meeting was adjourned at 8:16 P.M.